

Printed  
A SKETCH  
Of the Early Life and of the Civil and Military Services of



**MAJ. GEN. JOHN W. GEARY,**

CANDIDATE OF THE NATIONAL UNION PARTY  
FOR GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA.

1866.

1850-1851



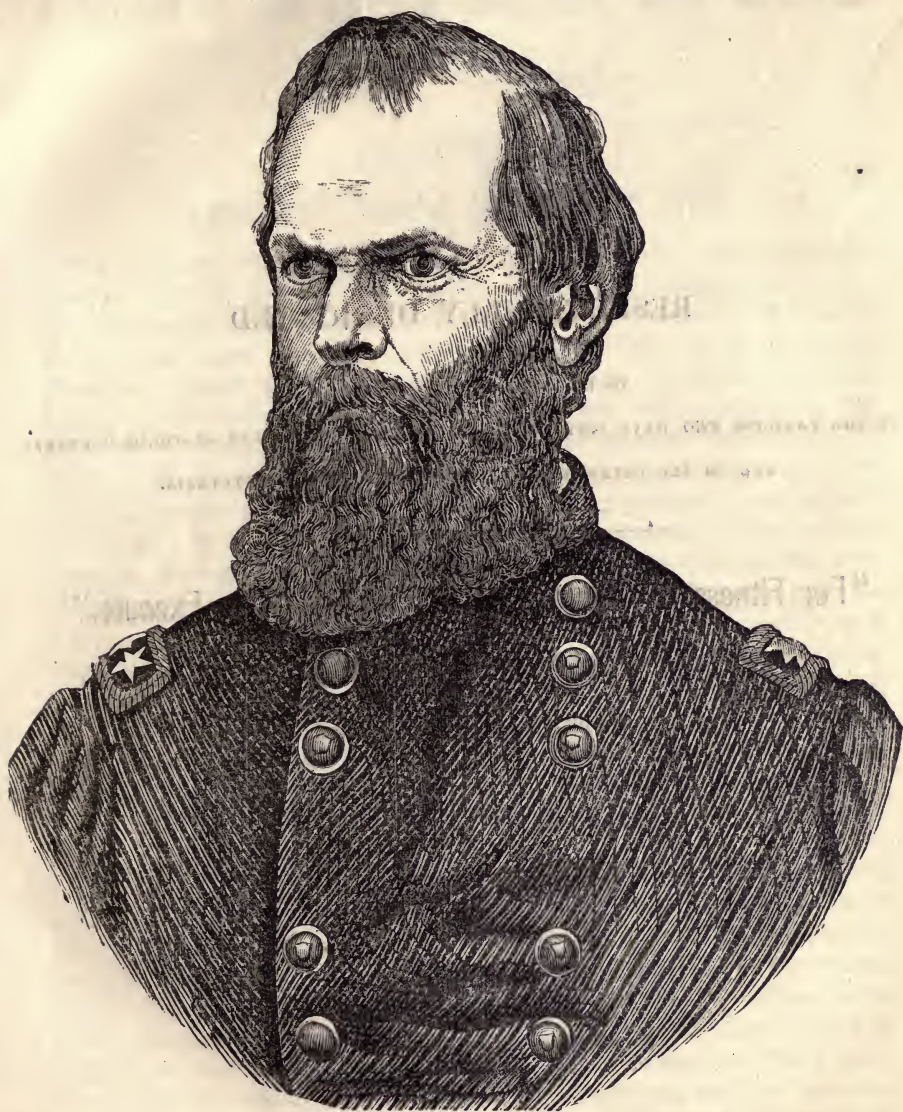
GEN. JOHN W. GEARY

FOR THE RECORD OF THE BUREAU



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SKETCH A

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO HIS OLD COMPANIONS IN ARMS,

TO THE FAMILIES WHO HAVE SUFFERED BEREAVEMENT IN THE CAUSE OF THEIR COUNTRY,

AND TO ALL PATRIOTIC AND LOYAL VOTERS OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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"For Fitness to Command, and Promptness to Execute."

GENERAL GEARY'S COMMISSION AS BREVET MAJOR GENERAL,

DATED JANUARY 12, 1865.

KING & BAIRD, PRINTERS,  
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# A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF MAJ. GEN. JOHN W. GEARY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ANCESTRY, BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.

The supposed availability of a candidate is the controlling argument in most political nominations. Influenced by this consideration, parties have frequently felt themselves obliged to ignore the claims of favorite leaders, and select candidates whose obscurity would prove the surest protection against the assaults of their opponents. In some memorable instances, both federal and state nominations have been made upon this principle. Fitness has thus been sacrificed to success. Sometimes the sacrifice of persons is accepted to insure the triumph of principles, but every sincere patriot, in such a case, submits to the alternative with painful reluctance. It may be deemed, therefore, most fortunate, when all the elements of availability and fitness are found uniting in a candidate; and, in every such instance, a party triumph stands as a certain guarantee for a wise and faithful administration. Such is the allotment of good fortune which Divine Providence has been pleased to assign to the National Union Party of the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Their candidate for the Chief Magistracy of the State is well known throughout the country for his long, varied and eminent public services; while his conduct in both personal and official relations has ever been such as to court investigation, and win the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens of all shades of political opinion.

At a remote period his ancestors were Scotch-Irish, but for several generations they had inherited the inestimable privileges and honors of American birth. Richard Geary—his father—was a native of Franklin county, Pennsylvania. Margaret White—his mother—was born in Washington county, Maryland. Richard Geary received the advantages of a liberal education, and was a man of refined tastes, amiable disposition, and great moral excellence. Margaret White was, in all respects, fitted to be his companion. Shortly after their marriage, the young husband removed with his family to Western Pennsylvania. His attention was soon directed to the mineral wealth of that section, and he was induced to engage his talents and capital in the manufacture of iron. A business involving, at all times, much risk and responsibility, it was far more precarious in our country then than now; and like many of the iron manufacturers of that period, Mr. Geary failed in business, losing the whole of his original investment, and leaving himself still under pecuniary liabilities which he was unable to discharge. In this trying exigency of his affairs, he fell back

upon the resources which a liberal education had furnished, and opened a select school in Westmoreland county. The rest of his life was devoted to the honorable and useful, but seldom lucrative profession of teaching; and he died insolvent from his previous failure in business, leaving his family without provision for their maintenance and education. In their affliction, however, there remained to them the pleasing reflection that the husband and father had been instrumental in so directing the minds, and forming the character of his pupils, as to give promise of that distinction in civil life, to which they subsequently attained; and notwithstanding his pecuniary misfortune, he had bequeathed to them principles worthy of their most sacred preservation, and a reputation without stain.

By the will of her father, Mrs. Richard Geary inherited several families of slaves, all of whom she first *educated*, and then *manumitted*. The manumission of slaves, at that day, was a thing of frequent occurrence, but the gift of freedom was rarely preceded by an education that would enable the recipients to make the most of its advantages. This instance, though not regarded as noteworthy at the time, is very significant now, indicating, as it does, that love of liberty and of justice which has ever so strikingly characterized the eventful life of her distinguished son.

The home of Richard and Margaret White Geary was an humble log-house, situated near Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania. In this county were born to the happy husband and wife four children—all sons. The first and the third died young. The second is the Rev. Edward R. Geary, an eminent Presbyterian clergyman, who for the last fourteen years has resided in Oregon. The youngest is Major-General John White Geary, the candidate of the National Union party, and destined to be the next Governor of Pennsylvania. General Geary was born December 20th, 1819, and is consequently in his forty-seventh year. After attending to the usual course of preliminary study, he entered Jefferson College, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. In this institution he remained for some time, making diligent use of his opportunities, but was obliged, in consequence of the death of his father, to leave school before the period of graduation. The circumstance of his father's failure in business has already been noted, and also the dependent condition of the family at the time of his death. The stroke fell heavily upon the hopes of the young student, but he braced himself nobly to meet its consequences. Promptly, though with reluctance, retiring from college, he at once assumed the care of his sorrow-stricken mother, and by opening a school, as his father had done, provided for the comfort of her declining years. In his estimation, however, it was not enough that he should provide for a widowed mother. His father having, unavoidably, left certain claims of his creditors unsatisfied, the son honorably resolved that he would discharge them, and by persevering industry, self-denial, and economy, was enabled to accomplish this rare and exalted purpose. It was not difficult to foretell the future of a son who had evinced such affectionate solicitude for a living mother's comfort, and such a chivalrous regard for the honor of a dead father's memory. These instances of filial affection and rever-



ence, it is said, very deeply impressed the minds of all the old neighbors and friends of the family; induced them to speak of young Geary in the most flattering terms, and to predict for him the proud achievements which have since become facts of sober history.

The profession of a teacher not proving sufficiently remunerative, and having by ample experiment found it to be unsuited to his tastes and aspirations, after a brief clerkship in a wholesale store at Pittsburg, he commenced the study of civil engineering, thus yielding to a strong predilection for mathematical pursuits, which he had displayed during his collegiate course. In addition to this important branch of science, he subsequently studied law, and was admitted to practice. By these varied acquirements, he was qualified for the different positions of public trust and responsibility which he has filled with so much distinction as a citizen and a soldier.

### Personal Characteristics.

This biographical sketch being necessarily very limited, no attempt will be made to give a full analysis of the personal qualities of its distinguished subject. "A sound mind in a sound body" was the phrase used by the old Romans to express their idea of that peculiar type of the human constitution which is naturally adapted to the accomplishment of great deeds. Such a mind is clear in perception, sober and accurate in judgment, prompt, persistent and victorious in action. A man thus endowed is naturally fitted for the deliberations of the assembly, the decisions of the bench, the duties of the magistracy, and the dangers and responsibilities of the field. General Geary has been tried in each of these situations; and has signally proved his eminent fitness for them all. And besides these powers he possesses that natural faculty for *leadership*, without which, even superior men, never advance to prominent positions in the contests of life.

The fact of his endowment with this great quality has received numerous and striking illustrations. Whether the service has been civil or military that engaged his attention, he has achieved a commanding position. It should be noted also that his faculty for leadership has been rendered more effective by the endowment of a fine *personal presence*. In person, General Geary is tall, erect and well-proportioned. In manner, he is direct, simple, and cordial. Either in military undress, or in full costume, at the head of an army, he *looks* every inch the soldier; and at the head of the Commonwealth he will look every inch the Governor.

But of more intrinsic value, and of paramount importance, are the moral qualities of our candidate. His moral basis is sound, strong, and enduring. For this he is indebted to his Scotch-Irish descent, and his early and careful religious instruction and discipline. *These causes have implanted and developed in him a conscience that is tender and wakeful, a love of truth and justice which temptation has neither supplanted nor impaired; and especially a force of will which holds the most dangerous of nature's appetites and passions under easy and complete control.* Thus constituted, he has escaped

the vices which have destroyed so many gifted men. Placed in circumstances, during most of his life, that exposed him to temptations of peculiar power, he has not succumbed. Thus, for example, though the greater part of his public life has been spent on the frontier or in camp, he has been noted for his temperate and abstemious habits. In regard to all moral and religious questions, General Geary is a man of liberal views, and of a true Christian spirit. Nothing short of this could be expected, considering the ancestry from which he has derived his name and inherited his principles. And should he live to assume the highly important trust of the State's Chief Magistracy, it will be with a becoming sense of his obligations to his fellow-citizens, and of his accountability to Almighty God.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CIVIL RECORD. (California.)

The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which defined and established the results of our Mexican war, extended the national boundary line from the Rio Grande to the Pacific Ocean. California, with her gold-streaked mountains, was included in that rich and vast accession to the national domain. As soon as it was ascertained that the rocks and sands of the newly-acquired Territory were rich in the most precious of all metals, emigration, as a very gulf-stream, began to flow around Cape Horn, and across the Isthmus. At the same time, from the banks of the Missouri river, caravan after caravan began to wend its toilsome way across the plains, and through the passes of the Rocky mountains. "The gold of that land was good," and the rich deposits of the new "*El Dorado*" were quickly and eagerly sought by natives of all climes and nations. All shades of opinion and character were there. Of this strangely diversified community, it might be said "there was no Judge in Israel; every one walked in the ways of his own heart, and in the sight of his own eyes." But love of order, and reverence for law, are among the most prominent characteristics of the American mind! Out of the heterogeneous mass of men, which the powerful attraction of gold had brought together from the nationalities of the Old and the New World, there accordingly arose a civil community, under the usual forms of American law, and governed in the usual modes of American administration. It was on this strange and singularly interesting theatre, that John W. Geary commenced his public career.

Appointed Postmaster of San Francisco, and Mail Agent for the Pacific Coast.

On the 22d of January, 1849, President Polk, in grateful recognition of his gallant services in the Mexican war, appointed him Postmaster of San Francisco, with full authority to create post offices, appoint post-



masters, establish mail routes, and make contracts for carrying the mails throughout California. Having received his commission at Washington, with his customary promptness he returned to his home in Westmoreland county, closed up his business, and on the 1st of February, in company with his wife and child, sailed from New York for the distant scene of his official responsibility. The passage of the Isthmus was made in a small boat, and was at that time attended with inconvenience and danger. Arriving safely, however, at Panama, he was detained there nearly a month, waiting for the steamer Oregon, which was to call for passengers at that port on her trip to California, via Cape Horn. Subjected to this detention, and being as ever before and since, incapable of idleness or useless occupation, he organized a Masonic society, and an association of Odd-Fellows, both of which were designed to afford relief to sick and destitute emigrant passengers. These two societies continued to exist as monuments of his thoughtful prudence, and humane foresight, until the increased facilities for travelling across the Isthmus rendered them no longer necessary. *This may seem to some a trifling circumstance, but it is very significant as an illustration of the pleasing fact that, at no stage of his public career, has he ever made even a brief pause without doing something beneficial, and to cause his name to be held in grateful remembrance.*

### A Perilous Adventure.

During his detention at Panama, there occurred to him an adventure, not without peril, and that might have been attended with serious consequences to his life, but for his native quickness and presence of mind in all times of emergency and danger. The incident referred to is thus related by a well-known author: "Three or four days after his arrival in the city, he discovered that he had been robbed during the night of a number of valuable articles, and about daylight went to the guard, consisting of a sergeant and twelve men, whose guard-house was in the jail-building, to obtain information concerning the robbery. Here, though he addressed them in good Spanish, they pretended not to understand him, and plied him with some insulting questions. One of the party finally struck him on the ear, and being incensed by so gross an outrage, he instantly knocked the fellow down. Quickly perceiving his error, and observing his desperate position, he rushed between two men, tripping them, and knocking down another, sprang into the guard room. This room was about thirty feet long, and at the rear end were stacked the arms of the garrison. He seized a loaded musket from the pile, and placing his back to the remainder, threatened to shoot the first man who should enter the door. Glancing his eyes around, he recognized his perilous situation. The sides of the room were of rough logs, between the interstices of which peered at every corner the dark and desperate faces of the prisoners in the contiguous jail cells. Before him were thirteen armed and hostile men, anxious and determined to destroy him. On repeating his questions concerning the robbery, one of them threw himself on a pile of blankets, and said that they had slept in that position

all night, and had kept no watch. This man attempted, by rolling himself on the blankets, to seize Colonel Geary by the leg and trip him, upon which the latter snatched the rascal's bayonet from its scabbard, and placed it on the end of the musket in his own hands. The fellow repeating his effort, the Colonel stabbed him in the leg, and seizing him, with part of the blankets, hurled him out of the door, and thus, unexpectedly, uncovered his stolen property. Having thus firmly fastened the evidence of their theft upon the men, the stolen goods being in sight, they immediately yielded, obeyed all his orders, threw their bayonets upon the ground, and forming themselves in line, carried the articles back to his quarters, and placed them on the spot whence they had been taken.

"Before leaving the guard-room the Colonel took the precaution to knock out all the flints and remove the priming from the remaining arms. When he reached his quarters, he sent twelve of the men back, and knocking out the flint and priming, and reversing the bayonet of the gun he had retained, he gave it to the last man of the guard, whom he summarily kicked down stairs." (See the "Annals of San Francisco.") The Spanish-Americans have great respect for the prompt will, and the strong hand; and it is scarcely necessary to add that, after what had happened, Colonel Geary was treated with marked consideration during the remainder of his sojourn among them.

### Arrival at San Francisco.

The "Oregon," arriving at last, the Colonel and his family took passage, and were safely landed at San Francisco on the 1st of April, a little more than two months from the date of his commission. Entering at once upon his duties, he was obliged to content himself for a time with the rudest accommodations. Having no mail-boxes, he drew lines upon the floor, forming squares, which were duly alphabeted, and in these the letters were arranged, and, as called for, were delivered through a hole in the window made by the removal of a pane of glass. Here, however, as in all other situations of his life, his methodical turn, and practical tact, soon provided all needful facilities, and brought the labors of the office under an easy and expeditious system of operation. But scarcely had he effected these arrangements when he learned that General Taylor, who had succeeded to the Presidency, had appointed Jacob B. Moore, Esq., to the position which he had so briefly but efficiently occupied.

### Unanimously elected First Alcalde of the City.

About the time of his removal from the post-office, and general mail agency, Brigadier-general Riley, having been appointed military governor of the territory, issued a proclamation to the settlers to assemble in convention for the purpose of organizing a territorial government. By the easy and intelligent dispatch with which Colonel Geary discharged his duties as postmaster and mail-agent, he had won the confidence and esteem of the people, so that when the time arrived for the nomination of candidates to fill the positions created by the new organization, he was selected



for the office of First Alcalde. This action of his fellow-citizens was not in harmony with his known and oft-repeated wishes, yet they persisted in placing his name on every one of the *ten* tickets presented to the people, and at the ensuing election he was unanimously chosen, as was officially certified in the following document :

"To HON. JOHN W. GEARY:

"At a special election held in San Francisco, August 1st, 1849, to fill the vacancy existing in the office of First Alcalde of said town and district, you were elected by fifteen hundred and sixteen votes, being the whole number cast.

"FREDERICK BILLINGS,

*"Chairman Board of Inspectors and Judges.*

*"SAN FRANCISCO, August 2, 1849."*

This was only *eight days* after his retirement from the office which he had held by appointment from the Federal Executive. This flattering testimonial from his fellow-citizens was almost immediately succeeded by another mark of confidence and appreciation indicated in the following proclamation of Governor Riley:

### Appointed Judge of First Instance.

"Know all men, by these presents, that I, Bennet Riley, Brevet Brigadier-general United States Army, and Governor of California, by virtue of authority in me vested, do hereby appoint and confirm J. W. Geary as Judge of First Instance in and for the district of San Francisco, to date from the 1st of August, 1849. Given under my hand and seal, at San Francisco, Cal., this 6th day of August, A. D. 1849.

(Official.)

"B. RILEY,

*"Bt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A. and Gov. of California.*

"H. W. HALLECK,

*"Bt. Capt. and Secretary of State."*

The office of Alcalde, and that of Judge of First Instance, were Mexican institutions. How onerous and important their duties were will be seen from a brief enumeration. The Alcalde was Sheriff, Probate Judge, Recorder, and even Notary Public and Coroner. In addition to these functions, he held daily an ordinary Police or Mayor's Court, as well as a regular Alcalde's Court for the minor cases and general executive matters of the city. The Judge of First Instance held a Court, having both civil and criminal jurisdiction throughout the city; and a Court of Admiralty also, exercising authority in all maritime cases. In fact, Judge Geary was, by virtue of his two appointments, general Curator of the public, doing every thing that was to be done, either in the department of civil or criminal business. For a long time there was no other magistrate in the town, and the Judge was finally obliged to request the appointment of an assistant, when Hon. W. B. Almond was made Judge of First Instance with civil jurisdiction only. All these varied and intricate duties Judge Geary performed with the utmost satisfaction to the people.

## Unanimous Re-election.

At the close of the year a new election took place, when he was re-elected, *receiving all the votes but four* out of the twelve thousand that were polled. He continued in office until the following spring, at which time the old Mexican institutions were supplanted by our own system of municipal government.

## Administrative Ability and Integrity.

In the departments to which the public voice had called him, both his talents for administration and the integrity of his character found many occasions for signal illustration. Under the old Mexican laws, Alcaldes had power to grant away the public lands at the fixed rates of twelve dollars for fifty vara lots, and twenty-four dollars for one hundred vara lots. All Mexican Alcaldes, previous to Geary's time, had availed themselves of this privilege, and disposed of an immense amount of valuable property at these merely nominal prices. No sooner had he been duly installed in office than he caused it to be understood that he would make no such grants, and would at once resign rather than conform to the previous custom. At his instance a committee was appointed to ascertain the value of the city property, at the old rates, and they reported it to be only \$35,000. Upon the reception of this report, the new Alcalde ordered a portion of the property to be sold at public auction, and it realized the handsome sum of half a million of dollars. As a matter of course, the unsold tracts immediately rose to a proportionate value, and became worth millions to the city treasury.

The authors of "Annals of San Francisco," who were eye-witnesses, speak of Colonel Geary's municipal administration in terms of strong and unqualified approbation. "The city," say they, "comprised people of every nation, class, and sort, many of whom had for months been exercising an unrestrained course of villainy and rascality, yet no civilized community was ever more harmoniously governed; and even after his administration had ceased, its condition could not compare with what it had been before, as was proved from the necessity of the action of the *Vigilance Committee*. Thefts and robberies were of so rare occurrence that valuable goods were frequently left in the streets unwatched and undisturbed, and people felt no hesitancy in quitting their unprotected and generally open abodes for hours, and even days, without the slightest apprehension of suffering loss during their absence. The rogues had either left the place or were terrified by the few examples of severe reprehension that were given. They soon learned that they had nothing to expect either from the tenderness or partiality of the magistrate. A conviction was sure to be followed by a merited and speedy punishment, rendered as severe as opportunities permitted and circumstances seemed to demand. Finding that the rascals cared little for confinement in the prison-brig, where they ate the bread of idleness at the public expense, the Alcalde adopted a better method to hold them in awe, and teach them the observance of good manners. He



established a chain-gang, and attaching a chain and large ball to the ankles of the criminals, that they might not escape, set them to work at improving the public streets, thus compelling them to earn their keeping; and, at the same time, be serviceable to the community. This company became a feature of the place. The people of the city appreciated these efforts, and even those who suffered admitted the justice of the Alcalde's decrees. *Of twenty-five hundred civil and criminal cases tried by him, not more than a dozen appeals were taken from his decisions, and not one of these was ever sustained. Throughout the whole period of his arduous labors he exercised an unwavering firmness, and discharged his duties regardless of feelings of preference or claims of friendship."*

### Chosen first Mayor of San Francisco.

The first city charter having been adopted May 1, 1850, Judge Geary was elected first Mayor of San Francisco by a very flattering majority. During his official term he rendered most valuable service in the work of perfecting the municipal organization; restrained all tendency to extravagant expenditure of the public funds; nobly sustained the city's credit; hastened with a few citizen soldiery to Sacramento and quelled some serious riots there; and for his almost superhuman efforts to save the city, during the great conflagration, he received the grateful acknowledgments of the people, and the highest encomiums of the public press without distinction of party. Toward the expiration of his term of office Mayor Geary received a communication, numerously signed by influential business firms and respectable citizens of every hue and shade of political opinion, requesting him to consent to be a candidate for re-election. But, while entertaining a grateful sense of the honor that was done him by such an expression, he felt himself obliged to decline the request. He was prevailed on, however, to accept a place in the Board of Commissioners, which had been created by the Legislature for the management of the funded debt of the city, and served as their President. In this position he did much to create a feeling of confidence in the city's securities, and to induce a belief in the public mind that she would keep the faith which had been plighted to her creditors.

### Secures the Adoption of a Free State Constitution for California.

The services of Colonel Geary to the young and rapidly growing community on the Pacific had been of great value, and, as has been seen, they were duly appreciated and acknowledged by his fellow-citizens of all parties. But the most important service that distinguished his residence on that coast remains to be stated. On the 1st of September, 1849, a Convention of Delegates assembled at Monterey to form a State Constitution. This body included the best talent and ripest political experience of the territory. Robert Semple, Esq., was chosen President, and Captain Wm. G. Marcy, Secretary. The Convention completed its work in a little more than one month, and closed its session on the 13th of October. Colonel Geary was not a member of the Convention, but occupied such a position

in the eye of the public at large, and held such relations to his party (the Democratic) as enabled him to exert a very potent influence upon its transactions. How he exerted that influence, and what it was worth to California and the whole country, will be understood when it is stated that, as Chairman of the Democratic Territorial Committee, he was mainly instrumental in securing the *Free State clause* in the newly framed Constitution, and the reference of that document to the people for their sanction. In order to obtain this inestimable triumph for the great principle of freedom Colonel Geary merely conceded to its opponents the temporary and trifling advantage of the election of the two Senators that were to represent the new State in the Federal Congress. From the foregoing narrative it will be seen what one patriotic, capable, and earnest man may, in a very short period of time, accomplish for his country. John W. Geary passed through the "*Golden Gate*," landing at San Francisco on the 1st day of April, 1849, and left California on the 1st day of February, 1852. In less than three years he had achieved more than most men achieve in a lifetime of three score and ten.

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## CHAPTER III.

### CIVIL RECORD CONTINUED. (Kansas.)

#### Early Difficulties.

It is not proposed in a sketch, so brief as the present, to attempt a history, nor even anything that could be properly styled an outline, of political troubles in Kansas. It will be necessary, however, to present a few preliminary facts in order to a satisfactory understanding of what has now passed into our history as Geary's administration of the civil government of that territory.

The memorable Kansas-Nebraska Bill, introduced and advocated by Stephen A. Douglas, after being discussed with ability and eloquence, vehemence and passion, rarely equalled, finally passed both houses of Congress, and on the 30th of May, 1854, received the signature of President Pierce. As must have been foreseen by its author, and its advocates, in re-opening the whole vexed question of slavery extension, it produced great excitement in political parties, in social circles, in the pulpit, and in the press all over the country. Pro-slavery men on one hand, and anti-slavery men on the other, at once commenced operations; the former to settle Kansas with a population in favor of slavery; and the latter with a population opposed to it. In the slave States *secret organizations* were formed with the design of introducing slavery, and in the free States "*Emigrant Aid Societies*" were organized to introduce settlers who would vote for its exclusion. In view of these circumstances it may be readily conjectured that the emigrant parties, having been heated by discussion at the two extremes of the country, would not long dwell peacefully to-



gether in the same neighborhood. And, as was the anticipation, so was the reality. On the 6th of October, 1854, the very day on which Andrew H. Reeder, Esq., first Governor of the Territory, arrived, a party of pro-slavery men came from Westport to Lawrence with intent to disperse the Free State men, who had founded that town and settled the adjacent country. The invaders demanded that the "abolitionists" should abandon their cabins, strike their tents, and leave the territory. But greatly to the surprise of the slave-driving chivalry, the freedom-loving Yankees, instead of obeying orders, prepared to fight in defence of their property and their families.

### The Contending Parties seek to Conciliate the Governor.

As soon as the Governor arrived each party had an interview, stated its grievances, and volunteered such suggestions as seemed good to it, respecting what should be the course of his administration. But that high official knew his duty quite as well as his advisers, and was not to be turned from his purpose to discharge it. The Act of Congress, creating a government for Kansas, provided that the actual settlers of the Territory should decide for themselves, by vote, whether slavery should or should not exist within its bounds. To this act Governor Reeder was inflexibly determined to conform. The result was that as soon as his line of policy became known the pro-slavery settlers banded together against him. All they could do they did to annoy him personally. All they could do they did to defeat his endeavors to administer the laws which he had been commissioned to execute. They even carried their political opposition to personal violence. A certain ruffian, bearing the name of Stringfellow, and the title of General, assaulted and beat the Governor severely in his own office. Meanwhile complaints had been lodged against that impartial functionary at Washington, and he was removed from his position. During the interval which elapsed between the removal of Governor Reeder and the arrival of his successor—Wilson Shannon—Daniel Woodson, Secretary of the Territory, acted as governor, and exercised his authority in strict accordance with the preferences and interests of the pro-slavery party.

Gov. Shannon assumed his official duties September 1, 1855. Whatever may have been his personal desires and aims, he was certainly not the man to govern such a community as that of Kansas Territory. Under his administration, therefore, the passions of the contending parties were more intensely inflamed. Affairs daily became more complicated. Confusion was worse confounded. There was no excess of crime that was left unperpetrated by the pro-slavery "*Border Ruffians*"—as they had come to be distinctively known, and shamelessly to designate themselves. Theft, rape, arson, highway robbery, and murder, were crimes with which this self-styled chivalry almost daily stained its hands. The issue which the pro-slavery men were resolved to force upon the Territory is thus stated by an eye-witness:—"It was of little consequence what number of Northern men might locate themselves in Kansas. It was assumed that

they had no right to come there, unless with the intention of assisting to make it a slave State. If they would not pledge themselves to that object they were abolitionists, allies of disunionism, and deserving of death; and so far from being a crime, it was a virtue to kill them."

### Conflicting Authorities.

Meanwhile, in the midst of all this, and partly productive of this state of things, there were two legislative bodies, each claiming to be the legally constituted law-making power of the Territory. First, the pro-slavery legislature convened at Leecompton, January 12th, 1857, elected mainly by Missouri voters; Secondly, the free State legislature convened at Topeka, January 6th, 1857. As a sanction for legislative authority each party had adopted a State constitution. In alluding to these shameful circumstances it is not pretended that the free State party had not also been guilty of great excesses. They had. But there was this palliation for their conduct. They had been driven to violent measures in pure self-defence. Their enemies were determined either to drive them from the Territory or destroy them. And when the pro-slavery men could not enlist the sympathies of the governor, in favor of their object, they combined against him, and sought to drive him from his office. They had succeeded in having Governor Reeder removed; and as Governor Shannon, though in sympathy with their opinions, could not be carried to their extreme lengths in support of the views which they mutually entertained, they petitioned for his removal also. And before their request had been granted, or rather, before their knowledge of it, they threatened him until he fled from his post through fear of assassination. What a story! What fearful days it foreshadowed! Voters had committed perjury; houses had been burned; crops had been destroyed; churches had been desecrated; women had been outraged; men had been murdered; battles had been fought! Such was the state of things when Col. John W. Geary was appointed Governor of Kansas.

### Appointed Governor of Kansas Territory.

He received his commission, in July, 1856, his appointment having been confirmed by the Senate without the usual reference to a committee. He was now to assume the duties of a position more difficult than any he had hitherto occupied. The story of his administration may soon be told. It consists of the formidable difficulties he was obliged to encounter, and of the spirit and means by which he overcame them. His preparations for the journey were made with his usual dispatch.

About the same date of Governor Geary's departure from Washington, Mr. Woodson, Secretary of State, and acting governor of Kansas, issued a proclamation, declaring the Territory to be in a state of rebellion, and summoning the militia to arms to suppress it. As the governor ascended the Missouri river, he met Ex-Governor Shannon on his way down the river, flying for his life. Besides this, when the steamer arrived at Glasgow, on the Missouri shore, Captain Jackson came on board with an armed



company of sixty men, *en-route* for Kansas, to aid in the work of driving out or exterminating the "abolitionists."

### Arrives at Fort Leavenworth.

The Governor reached Fort Leavenworth September 9th, 1856. On the very day of his arrival he wrote to Mr. Secretary Marcy, in these words:—"I arrived here this morning, and have passed the day mostly in consultation with General Persifer F. Smith, in relation to the affairs of the Territory, which, as I am now on the spot, I begin to more clearly understand.

"I find that I have not simply to contend against bands of armed ruffians and brigands, whose sole aim and end is assassination and robbery, infatuated adherents and advocates of conflicting political sentiments and local institutions, and evil disposed persons, actuated by a desire to obtain elevated positions; but worst of all, against the influence of men who have been placed in authority, and have employed all the destructive agents around them to promote their own personal interests, at the sacrifice of every just, honorable and lawful consideration. *The town of Leavenworth is now in the hands of armed bodies of men, who, having been enrolled as militia, perpetrate outrages of the most atrocious character under shadow of authority from the territorial government.*"

The facts of the case alluded to in this extract, were simply that the pro-slavery party, in their violent attempts to drive the free-soil settlers from the Territory, had obliged them to take up arms in self-defence, and then the acting governor (Woodson) had called out the militia (meaning the pro-slavery men) to put down a rebellion (meaning the anti-slavery men), who had taken up arms to defend their property, homes, and lives.

### The Situation.

To sum up the facts of the situation, which must be done briefly as possible, Governor Geary found the Territory in arms—a violent and utterly lawless party, bent upon the triumph of their policy in defiance alike of the Acts of Congress, and the laws of the Territory—and another party, not lawless, but equally determined to maintain their rights as citizens of the United States, and of the Territory of Kansas. These perplexing and most disagreeable circumstances, calling for the prompt and decided action of the Governor, were greatly aggravated by the facts that the sympathies and co-operation of the people of Missouri were violently enlisted in behalf of their pro-slavery brethren in Kansas—and that the Legislature, and the United States Judges of that Territory, were furiously and blindly committed to the same side.

**"Equal and Exact Justice to All," to be the Cardinal Principle of His Administration.**

Governor Geary, always quick-sighted, prompt and practical, was not long in ascertaining the true state of public affairs, nor in deciding upon the course which he ought to pursue. Having duly informed himself, and calmly made up his mind, he fearlessly announced his policy. In a public

address at Lecompton, he said: "I appear among you, a stranger to most of you, and for the first time have the honor to address you as Governor of the Territory of Kansas. *The position was not sought by me, but was voluntarily tendered by the Chief Magistrate of the Nation.* As an American citizen, deeply conscious of the blessings which ever flow from our beloved Union, I did not consider myself at liberty to shrink from any duties, however delicate and onerous, required of me by my country. With a full knowledge of all the circumstances surrounding the executive office, I have deliberately accepted it, and as God may give me strength and ability, I will endeavor to faithfully discharge its varied requirements.

"The Constitution of the United States, and the organic law of the Territory, will be the lights by which I shall be guided in my executive career."

The same just and patriotic sentiments pervaded his first annual message to the territorial assembly. "I will administer," said he, "*equal and exact justice* to all men, of whatever political party or religious persuasion." Upon this eternal principle the Governor took his stand at the outset, and there he maintained himself to the last. And as he had good reason to anticipate, this faithful attitude roused, and combined against him, all those elements of violence and disorder which had disgraced the Territory prior to his assumption of its government. But he who is right need never fear, and the new Governor was not only right, but prompt, and capable in all matters of administration to a degree that has seldom fallen to the lot of man required to govern his fellow-mortals.

An army of three thousand men had come to destroy the free State town of Lawrence, and in the less pious and elegant, than vehement and forcible language of that section, "*to wipe out the d——d abolitionists.*"

The Governor rode into their camp, at Franklin, unattended, assumed command of the forces, and addressing to them some earnest words of patriotic and loyal counsel, disbanded and sent them to their homes. When he approached their lines he did not know whether they would shoot him or acknowledge his authority. It was an extremely critical case. It required great presence of mind. But he was equal to the situation. Lecompte, a third-rate Maryland lawyer, Chief Justice of the Territory, used his authority both under and above, within and beyond the law, to promote the interests of the pro-slavery cause. But the Governor overruled his decisions. The Legislature enacted laws directly in conflict with the Federal Constitution and the organic law of the Territory. But the Governor vetoed them.

Finally, perceiving that opposition, personal and official, would not drive him from his just purposes, they changed their tactics, and if he would favor the pro-slavery policy they promised that he should be Senator from the new State in the Federal Congress. But to the man who had the audacity to make to him this proposition, the Governor declared, should he have the infamous assurance to repeat it, he would pitch him through the window.



## Peace Restored to Kansas.

Governor Geary, as we have seen, assumed the functions of office September 9th, 1856. Three weeks from that day, owing to his vigorous and skilful measures, he was enabled to make to Secretary Marcy the announcement contained in the following lines:

"Peace now reigns in Kansas. Confidence is gradually being restored. Settlers are returning to their claims. Citizens are resuming their ordinary pursuits, and a general gladness pervades the community."

His administration was brief, terminating in six months from the date of its inauguration. In this short space of time he had suppressed all organized violence, and restored the supremacy of the Federal and territorial laws. It must, therefore, have been with a proud and grateful sense of satisfaction that he was able to say to Secretary Marcy, in his last official communication to that gentleman:

"In this state of affairs the most vigorous and determined action on my part seemed the only remedy for the growing evils. *Impartial justice will ever commend itself to every American citizen worthy to bear the name.* To disband armed bodies of men assembled under color of law, and disperse others brought into antagonistic existence without authority, both inflamed by the most exciting of questions, and both committing outrages which all good men must deplore, required neither hesitation nor fear.

"I am most happy to inform you, that in order to calm these disturbing elements, and bring the people back to sober reason, I have not been obliged to resort to any measures unknown to the law, and not covered by the spirit and letter of my instructions. It is also a matter of special gratification to be able to say, that since my arrival here, peace has been restored, and the fierce passions of man soothed, *without the shedding of one drop of fratricidal blood.*

"The peace of the Territory is now placed upon a permanent basis, all parties at length having relinquished the idea of a resort to arms, and agreeing to refer the adjustment of all political disputes to the ballot-box, or other lawful expedients."

These lines were written as Franklin Pierce was preparing to vacate the Presidential Mansion. And being satisfied, from intelligence which he could not doubt, that the incoming Administration would endeavor to force a pro-slavery policy upon Kansas, contrary to the organic law, and the wishes of a majority of the territorial residents, on the very day of James Buchanan's inauguration Governor Geary forwarded to the newly-installed chief magistrate the following letter of resignation:

"EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, KANSAS TERRITORY,  
"LECOMPTON, March 4th, 1857.

"HIS EXCELLENCY, JAMES BUCHANAN,

"President of the United States.

"DEAR SIR:—Please accept my resignation as Governor of Kansas Territory, to take effect on the 20th of the present month, by which time you will be enabled to select and appoint a proper successor.

"With high respects, your friend and obedient servant,

"JOHN W. GEARY"

Thus terminated one of the most trying and difficult, and yet most successful and triumphant acts in the public life of the man whom the patriotic and loyal people of Pennsylvania, both civilians and soldiers, desire to honor. Let it speak for him. From it might be predicted the course he would pursue in the dreadful contest which treason and traitors were a few years later about to wage against the Union, and against those principles of constitutional liberty which he had so ably and successfully maintained in California and Kansas. And his civil administration of the affairs of these two Territories under circumstances of so much disorder and difficulty, clearly show his capacity to administer the affairs of our beloved Commonwealth, in these happier days of order, peace and prosperity.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MILITARY CAREER. (Mexico.)

All who are conversant with the political history of that period well remember that the annexation of Texas to the Federal Union was strongly opposed by many of the leading public journals, and by some of the most able and influential members of Congress in both Houses, on the ground that it would certainly provoke a war with the Republic of Mexico. The passion for territorial aggrandizement, however, proved too strong for successful resistance, especially as the accession presented to our Southern statesmen that most tempting bait—an opportunity to add, in due time, new slave States to the then existing fifteen. Joint resolutions for the admission of Texas passed the House of Representatives, February 25th, and the Senate, March 1st, 1845, and were approved by President Tyler the same day. The independence of Texas had never been acknowledged by Mexico, and though that government had no hope of reconquering and restoring the Texans to their former allegiance, the act of incorporation by the Congress of the United States naturally tended to produce estrangement and unfriendliness between the two countries.

The immediate cause of rupture, however, was a question of boundary. The Mexicans maintained that Texas had never been recognized by them as extending beyond the river Nueces, while the United States claimed the Rio Grande as her legitimate line of frontier. At the beginning of Mr. Polk's administration, he found the two governments involved in this dispute, and being resolved to make good the American claim, ordered General Zachary Taylor, with a small force, to occupy the region lying between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. In April, 1846, a slight collision occurred between the troops of General Taylor, and those of the Mexican commander, General Arista. When the news of this event reached Washington, the President immediately sent a special message to Congress, declaring that "war existed by the act of Mexico," and asking for men and money to carry it on. Congress, in response, promptly ap-



propriated \$10,000,000, and gave authority to call out 50,000 volunteers. The rashness of General Arista, in crossing the Rio Grande, had furnished the very occasion which President Polk, and the friends of his administration, most ardently desired. And the results of the contest, thus inaugurated, proved very soon that the Mexicans had either greatly overrated themselves, or greatly underrated the resources and warlike prowess of their Anglo-American neighbors.

### Geary Enlists in the Service of his Country.

At the commencement of hostilities, John W Geary was employed as Civil Engineer, and Superintendent of the Allegheny Portage Railroad. His temporary residence was in Cambria county; and quickly responding to the first call for volunteers, he recruited a company there, in a few days, which he organized under the name of "*American Highlanders*." This company was attached to the Second regiment, Pennsylvania volunteers. Immediately upon the organization of the regiment, Captain Geary was elected Lieutenant-colonel. This *election* may be regarded as strong proof of the confidence which officers and privates felt in his soldierly qualities, and was far more complimentary to him than if he had received his promotion at the hand of executive authority. This regiment joined the army of General Scott, at Vera Cruz, and was attached to the division commanded by General Quitman. The events of the campaign which followed, are as familiar as household words to every American reader. The victories achieved by the gallantry of American soldiers, under the direction of their great chief, need not be repeated here. They are embalmed in the country's history, and will inscribe, for all time, on the page of glory, the name of that inflexible patriot, and consummate Captain, who has so recently gone to his rest, followed by the proud and grateful benedictions of his countrymen.

Under the orders of Quitman, Colonel Geary distinguished himself for personal gallantry and military skill, particularly in the bloody battles of La Hoya, Cerro Gorda, Chapultepec and Garita de Belen. And when Quitman, always foremost, stormed the defences of the Capital, Geary and his Pennsylvanians were in the van, and charged shoulder to shoulder with the Southern braves, whom they have since met and vanquished on still more fiercely-contested fields.

Colonel Roberts having died, Geary was elected colonel of the regiment—his gallant companions thus giving him the highest mark of their confidence, in their power to bestow, after they had seen him so fully tested, under the fatigues of the march, and amid the thunders of battle. In the appointments to posts of duty and honor, which followed the occupation of the city, Colonel Geary, in consideration of the valuable services he had rendered in the capture, was assigned to the command of the great citadel of the Capital, and his commission as colonel, dated on the same memorable spot, and bestowed for the same reason, was the first ever received by an American in the city of the Montezumas. *It may not be the last!*

It was with Geary in Mexico as in California—his bravery, ability and integrity won for him that promotion to which an honorable ambition induced him to aspire. He left his peaceful home in Cambria county, as captain of his Highland company, and returned to it as colonel of the Second regiment of Pennsylvania volunteers.

## MILITARY RECORD. Continued.

### War of the Rebellion.

On the 12th of April, 1861, treason opened her batteries on Fort Sumter and a war began, which may safely challenge its parallel in all history. Any one who knew the principles and character, the private and public antecedents of John W. Geary, could not have been at a loss to determine which side he would take in such a conflict.

Colonel Geary was at his rural home in Westmoreland, when the thunders of armed treason first broke upon the ear of the nation. His lifelong political views and convictions, his high-toned and oft-tried patriotism, and the natural promptings of his military genius, all conspired to urge him to the field. He accordingly at once proceeded to Philadelphia for the purpose of recruiting a regiment, believing that he would have greater facilities there for the speedy accomplishment of his purpose, than in the country districts. As soon as it was generally known through the State that he had been commissioned by President Lincoln to organize a regiment, he received applications from no less than *sixty-six* companies, soliciting permission to join his command. Owing to these numerous and urgent requests, he was permitted to raise his regiment to the standard of *sixteen* companies, with one battery of six guns, making the organization, when complete, to consist of *seventeen hundred* officers and men. The artillery company, which formed a part of the regiment, was that which subsequently became so celebrated throughout the country as "*Knapp's Battery.*"

### Ordered to the Front—Battle of Bolivar.

Immediately upon the equipment of his command, Colonel Geary received orders to proceed to Harper's Ferry, with instructions to report to General Banks. Having joined Banks' corps, he was by order of that General assigned to the command of Maryland Heights, with a force consisting of one thousand men and four guns. In this position he first unsheathed his sword, and first shed his own blood, in that gigantic war which was so signally to maintain the supremacy of the ballot, and establish the authority of the national constitution. Here, with his small force, on the 16th of October, 1861, he fought the battle of Bolivar against an assailing force, consisting of five thousand men and seven guns, under command of Generals Ashby and Evans, and severely repulsed the enemy, after an engagement which lasted nearly eight hours. During the action the colonel was wounded in the right knee, and his command suffered



severely from the repeated and furious efforts of their assailants. But his superior officers, and his country, could congratulate him upon having corrected a serious mistake into which the self-confident rebels had fallen. They had boasted that they would undertake to whip the Union forces in the ratio of five to one; and there were some Union commanders against whom they made good their boast, but it was obvious that the commanding spirit at Bolivar was not of that number. In fact, Colonel Geary had completely reversed the scale upon which they had made their vaunting calculations. With one thousand men and four guns, he had severely beaten five thousand rebels with seven guns. As a beginning that was doing well.

### Battle of Leesburg—Appointed Brigadier-General.

The gallant, obstinate, and successful defence of his position at Bolivar, induced the assignment of Col. Geary to the command of the advance, in the movement shortly after made, into the head of the Shenandoah Valley, in the spring of 1862. On the 8th of March he bore a conspicuous part in the battle which resulted in the capture of Leesburg, and led the van of the Union column in the subsequent operations, by which the rebel forces were obliged to evacuate all the towns north of the Rappahannock, and were dislodged from their strongholds at Snicker's, Ashby's, Manassas and Chester Gaps, in the range of the Blue Mountains. These valuable results were achieved while Stonewall Jackson was within striking distance at Winchester; and for the services which Colonel Geary rendered in their accomplishment, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-general, his commission bearing date of April 25th, 1862. During the greater part of the time he held the rank of colonel, he had commanded a force equal in strength to a brigade, and immediately upon his promotion, he was assigned to the command of the 1st Brigade, 2d Division, 2nd Corps, General C. C. Augur being Division Commander, and Major-general N. P. Banks, Commander of the Corps.

### Battle of Cedar Mountain.

On the 26th of June, 1862, by appointment of the President, Major-general John Pope was placed in command of the army of Virginia, consisting of the corps of Frémont, Banks, and McDowell. On the 9th of August Banks' corps had a severe engagement with the rebels, under Stonewall Jackson, at Cedar Mountain. The weather was oppressively hot, and the Union troops suffered extremely from exhaustion, as well as from the furious assaults of that self-deceived man, and great soldier, who subsequently proved himself to be the most active and capable of all their antagonists. Brigadier-general Geary was again wounded slightly in the left foot, and severely in the right arm. The battle was obstinately contested, but the results of the day were adverse to the Union arms. Meanwhile Lee, having been relieved from all pressure on the south side of Richmond by the withdrawal of the army of the Potomac, under McClellan, rapidly massed his troops with the intention of falling

in united force upon Pope's command. Quickly perceiving the danger of his position, that General executed a hasty but well-conducted retreat across the Rappahannock. This movement was effected on the 17th and 18th of August. Lee and Jackson hotly pursued the retreating forces, and during the fifteen days following, General Pope fought them with greatly inferior numbers in a series of fiercely sustained but disastrous actions, at Manassas Junction, Gainsville, and Chantilly, known as the second Battle of Bull Run. Those were dark days for the republic! Many homes were shrouded in mourning for the patriotic and gallant dead who fell in those bloody conflicts. General Stevens, who had ranked so highly in his class at West Point, and served his country so well and bravely in the field, and General Phil Kearny, a lion in the day of battle the pride and joy of every patriotic heart, were among the slain. But Geary survived the dangers and reverses of that anxious and sorrowful period to win fresh laurels on other and more glorious fields.

### Appointed to the command of the 2d Division 12th Corps.

Shortly after the battle of Antietam, General Banks being removed to another and more important command, the 12th corps was assigned to General Slocum, and Geary was promoted to the command of its 2d division.

### Participates gallantly and is dangerously wounded in the great battle of Chancellorsville.

The chief command of the army of the Potomac having been transferred to Major-general Burnside, the only event of importance which distinguished its operations while subject to his orders, was the bloody and unsuccessful assault upon Lee's formidable lines at Fredericksburg. The 12th corps did not participate in that action. In a few days after its occurrence, Burnside was relieved from command, at his own request, and was succeeded by an officer distinguished as a major-general, and corps commander, but more familiarly known, in and out of the army, as "*Fighting Joe Hooker.*" The public expectation was considerably elevated by this important change, and though the new commander failed to achieve the full success he deserved, he fully maintained his old renown for fighting, and the reputation of an able general. During the latter part of winter and the first months of spring, General Hooker, having put his army in excellent condition and formed a comprehensive plan of campaign, crossed the Rappahannock and gave Lee battle at Chancellorsville on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of May, 1863. The results of the first and second day's fighting were not decisive for either of the contestants. But on the third day the battle was decided against the National forces by Stonewall Jackson's celebrated flank movement, and assault upon the extreme right of Hooker's position. As will ever be remembered, Jackson fell at the close of that bloody day, and the indecisive victory of the rebels was won at the fatal cost of the red right arm of their treasonable and blood-stained confederacy. In this memorable engagement, the 12th corps maintained a



conspicuous part, and General Geary, at the head of the 2d division, was distinguished for his coolness and courage among the many gallant and faithful leaders of the patriot hosts who so nobly vindicated the honor of the flag. In the course of the protracted and fearful struggle, he was noted for the almost reckless exposure of his person, and for the resistless fury with which he several times led his division against the ranks of the confident and stubborn foe. In this battle he was wounded in the right breast by the fragment of a shell, and so serious was the wound in its character that he yet despaired of ever recovering entirely from its consequences. It was at Chancellorsville that his command was first designated as the "*White Star*" division, by which name it continued to be known till its honorable discharge at the close of the war.

### Lee's Campaign in Pennsylvania—Battle of Gettysburg.

The battle of Chancellorsville was barren of results to the rebel commander-in-chief; and being unable to draw Hooker from the positions, which he occupied for the defence of Washington, he abandoned his intention of attacking that city, and began about the middle of June to move with his whole force towards the Pennsylvania line. Hooker observed his motions very keenly, and followed rapidly and skillfully upon his footsteps, as Lee acknowledged, in his report of his subsequent operations, to the rebel Secretary of War. But while in the very act of moving to the encounter, General Hooker was relieved, and Major-general George G. Meade was invested with the chief command. The public mind, already anxious and agitated in prospect of another great contest of arms, was rendered still more so by the intelligence of a change of commanders at such a critical juncture. But the appointment of Meade was signally justified by the results which immediately followed, and from the heights of Gettysburg his name will pass down on the page of his country's history, until the end of recorded time. The battle, like that of Chancellorsville, lasted three days, being fought on the first, second and third of July. On the morning of the anniversary of the Nation's Independence, the sun rose upon a scene, such as the eyes of men had not witnessed since the dawn that lighted the plain of Waterloo. The shattered and beaten army of the enemy was in full retreat. Its hitherto invincible leader had staked and lost, and was never to win another victory. In that great battle, fought on Pennsylvania soil, nearly all the loyal States were represented, and Pennsylvania's noble sons eclipsed the renown they had won in Mexico, and even transcended the heroic deeds of their revolutionary sires. By forced marches they had come to defend their hearthstones and family altars; covered with dust, streaming with perspiration, scorched by the sun, hungry and weary, but panting to be led against the invading hosts. Many of them had neither shirts on their backs, nor shoes on their feet. Day and night they still came on. By daylight of the second, they were assembled in force, when with one hasty cup of coffee, and a few morsels of hard tack and bacon, they fell into line, and advanced upon treason's

proud and defiant array. On the distant left was the Potomac, winding hard by the sacred spot where sleeps the dust of great Washington. In their rear was their metropolitan city, where the signers had put their names to the "Declaration," and gave a new nation, endowed with rational freedom, to the world.

All around them were the homes of their loved ones, and the graves of their lamented dead. Their very muskets seemed to be inspired by the hour and the situation. The humblest private rose to sublimest deeds of heroism. Meade—a Pennsylvanian—bore the responsibility of the dreadful hour. Reynolds—a Pennsylvanian—in the same glorious moment, gave back his life to God, and received the palm and crown of immortality. Hancock, Crawford and other Pennsylvanians, united with heroes from the other loyal States, for victory in this fearful struggle. Geary—a Pennsylvanian—on the first day occupied Round Top, and was the first to indicate its extreme importance. On the morning of the second, he was ordered to Culp's Hill, which he fortified; the same evening he was ordered back to assist in repelling an assault on the left centre; and the same night was recalled to Culp's Hill, where the next morning, after "seven hours and a quarter of desperate fighting," the advancing hosts of "Stonewall's" veterans, eager to avenge the fall of their adored commander, were hurled back in confusion and dismay. O ye patriot fathers, who were too old and infirm to join these heroes! and ye fathers and mothers, who had no sons to give, well may you envy those whose sons were marshalled on that famous field! Yes, well may you envy those whose children died to win, or live to wear, the dear-bought honors of those three momentous days!

### Transferred to the Army of the Southwest.

After Gettysburg came Chickamauga. The issue of that great battle was unfortunate for the Union arms. Rosecrans, the sterling patriot, the brave soldier, the skillful commander, did not fully sustain the reputation he had won amid the iron hail of Corinth and Stone River. But, George H. Thomas, saved the day from going down in the darkness of total defeat, and arose from the wrecks of its misfortunes to strike those famous blows for his flag and country at Franklin and Nashville, that will enshrine him for all time to come in every truly American bosom.

The defeat of General Rosecrans made it necessary to reinforce the Army of the Cumberland. For this purpose the 11th and 12th corps of the Army of the Potomac were detached, and ordered to join the Army of the Southwest. Geary still followed the fortunes of the 12th corps, and continued at the head of his old division. Other reinforcements were hurried forward to the scene of the late disaster. Grant, the silent and invincible, having laid Vicksburg in the dust, had now come to the mountains of Tennessee, and assumed the chief command. With that extraordinary clear-sightedness, promptitude, and vigor, which naturally belong to him, and which with other eminent qualifications, constitute him the greatest of living captains, he at once initiated a series of important



movements, designed to dislodge Bragg from the formidable positions he had gained by the victory at Chickamauga, in the previous autumn. In pursuance of his masterly plan, a battle was fought at Wauhatchie, October 28th, 1863; another at Lookout Mountain, November 24th; another at Mission Ridge, November 25th; and a fourth, November 27th, at Ringgold, in the State of Georgia. These victories won in such rapid succession, constitute Grant's great "Chattanooga Campaign," by which he hurled Bragg from heights which he fondly deemed inaccessible, drove him across the Tennessee line, and set all loyal hearts in the country wild with joy.

### Battle of Wauhatchie, fought by Geary's Division.

The name of General Geary will ever be proudly associated with the events of this brilliant campaign of his incomparable chief. It is not generally known, but it is a fact worthy of notice, that his division fought the battle of Wauhatchie alone. The other two divisions of Slocum's corps were, at that time, guarding the railroad between Bridgeport and Murfreesboro, a distance of twenty-eight miles from the scene of action. Geary's also was the only division of the corps that participated in the battles of Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, and Ringgold. Of the battle of Wauhatchie, General Hooker spoke in his official report, as follows:

"During these operations a heavy musketry fire, with occasional discharges of artillery, continued to reach us from Geary. It was evident that a formidable adversary had gathered around him, and that he was battering him with all his might. For more than three hours, without assistance, he repelled the repeated attacks of vastly superior numbers, and in the end drove them ingloriously from the field. *At one time they had enveloped him on three sides, under circumstances that would have dismayed any officer except one endowed with an iron will and the most exalted courage. Such is the character of General Geary.*

\* \* \* \* \*

"As to the loss of the enemy, it cannot fall short of fifteen hundred. Geary buried one hundred and fifty-seven rebels on his front alone. He took one hundred and thirty prisoners, and several hundred stand of small arms."

In reference to the same action his corps commander, General Slocum, addressed to him the following letter of congratulation:

"HEADQUARTERS TWELFTH CORPS, ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND,  
"MURFREESBORO, TENN., Nov. 13, 1863.

"MY DEAR GENERAL:—I am very happy to hear the good reports which reach me from all sides, relative to the conduct of your command in the recent action. *The contest was one of very great importance. The highest credit is awarded to you and your command, not only by General Thomas, but by all officers conversant with the circumstances.*

"As I was not with you I can claim no portion of the credit gained, nor can I, with good taste, publish an order expressing thanks to you, but I wish you and your command to know that I have been informed of all

the facts in the case, and that I feel deeply grateful for their gallant conduct and for the new laurels they have brought to our corps.

“H. W. SLOCUM.”

“Brigadier-general J. W. GEARY,

*“Commanding Second Division, Twelfth Army Corps.”*

### Bereavement in the Hour of Victory.

But this glorious campaign, in which General Geary bore so gallant and honorable a part, will ever be associated in his memory with an event that filled his heart with unutterable sorrow.

On this bloody field, his eldest son, Captain Edward R. Geary, then only nineteen years of age, commanded one of the sections of the celebrated “Knapp’s Battery,” and fell, pierced through the forehead, while bravely maintaining his position against the fierce assault of superior numbers. The following narrative is from the pen of one who knew this young officer well. In 1861, though scarcely sixteen years of age, he had been commissioned second lieutenant; he was afterwards, for meritorious services, promoted to first lieutenant, and served constantly in the field until his death.

“He was actively engaged in the battles of Cedar Mountain, Sulphur Springs, South Mountain, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and last the bloody field of Wauhatchie, besides numerous skirmishes, which were of frequent occurrence, during the campaigns of Banks and Pope in Virginia. In so high estimation was he held by his brethren in arms, who had witnessed his high soldierly bearing, and knew his virtues and manly qualities, that after the death of Captain Hampton, commanding Company F, Pennsylvania Independent Battery, who fell at Chancellorsville, both officers and men of that battery united in asking Governor Curtin to commission Lieutenant Geary as their captain. They still remained with the Army of the Potomac, while Knapp’s Battery went with Geary’s Division to Chattanooga. He was duly commissioned as captain. The commission and orders to report to the Army of the Potomac were *en route* to him at the time of his death. In the bloody field of Wauhatchie, he filled the post of first lieutenant, commanding one section of Knapp’s Battery. The slaughter in that command attests the fierceness of the struggle. About fifteen hundred men under General Geary (the balance of his division having been left several miles in the rear) were attacked from an eminence by not less than five thousand of Longstreet’s troops, of the enemy, commanded by him in person, at about midnight, in an open field, without intrenchments or cover of any kind. In the battery, four guns only were engaged, and nearly all the horses were killed or wounded. Captain Atwell and Lieutenant Geary were among the slain. After several hours’ hard fighting the enemy were repulsed at every point with great slaughter. In the hour of danger, Lieutenant Geary was cool and intrepid. Though in many a fearful fight, he never for a moment faltered; always conscious that instant death might summon him at any moment into the presence of his God. To a friend riding by his side to the battle of Antietam, he said, “We are here now, but who can tell where we shall be an hour hence?” And with an affectionate farewell he immediately passed to his post in the thickest of the fight.

“As an artillerist he had no superior in the army. It was his custom in battle to dismount and assist in working his guns. In this action, in the act of sighting his gun, his forehead pierced with a bullet, young



Geary fell, and instantly expired. His father coming to the spot, clasped in an agonizing embrace the lifeless form of his boy, then mounting his horse, dashed wildly into the thickest ranks of the foe, and rode like an avenging spirit over that bloody field until the enemy were utterly routed and put to flight. This General Hooker pronounced the most gallant and successful charge that has come to his knowledge during the war. Generals Grant, Thomas and Hooker rode upon the field the next morning, complimenting in strong terms General Geary for his stubborn resistance to an immensely superior force. The supplies to the army at Chattanooga are saved; alas, with what a sacrifice! The eye of the General is moistened with tears. His first-born has fallen a sacrifice, and many a gallant spirit who had followed him through many a bloody fight has bit the dust. Thus fell a noble son of a noble sire; another victim to this accursed rebellion; another pledge given by our country in the blood of her noblest sons, that the freedom bequeathed to us by patriot ancestors shall be by us transmitted, unimpaired, redeemed and purified, to our posterity."

### The Battles of Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge and Ringgold.

On November 24th the battle of Lookout Mountain was fought, under the immediate leadership of General Geary. After the contest at Wauhatchie, and when the results of that victory had settled the question of supplying the army at Chattanooga, it was determined that an effort should be made to drive the enemy from Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge. General Hooker selected Geary for the perilous work of taking the Mountain, and in less than an hour after our Pennsylvania commander received the order, his troops were on the march. Crossing Lookout Creek, the rebel pickets were surprised and captured, and Geary's men moved quietly over ledges and boulders, onward and upward, until they had rounded the rugged peak and stood beneath the lofty palisades. The contest was sharp but decisive, and as the mist which enveloped the mountain cleared away, the troops in the valley beneath for the first time were enabled to ascertain the position of their comrades, and to know that they had been victorious. The enemy, driven by a succession of terrible assaults from their redoubts, redans and rifle-pits, fled in disorder down the mountain sides.

This contest has been most aptly termed "The battle above the clouds," and no more conclusive proof of its importance and severity could be added than the following extract from the official report of General Hooker: "Viewed from whatever point," says the General, "Lookout Mountain, with its high palisaded crest and its steep, rugged, rocky and deeply furrowed slopes, presented an imposing barrier to our advance, and when to these natural obstacles were added almost interminable well-planned and well-constructed defences, held by Americans, the assault became an enterprise worthy of the ambition and renown of the troops to whom it was entrusted." During the battle, General Geary captured a large amount of ammunition and stores, and twenty-one hundred of the enemy.

From Lookout the enemy were pursued across the Valley to Mission Ridge, where they again attempted to make a stand, but the attempt was in vain. The history of that battle of November 25th has been faithfully written, and it is only our duty to say that Geary was there, and, as

fighting Joe Hooker remarked, "always in the right place." While his brother commanders were driving the rebel troops from their works on the sides and summit of the ridge, he rolled up their left in the Rossville gap.

From Mission Ridge to Ringgold was but a comparatively short distance, and on the 27th of November our advance came up with the rear of the flying foe at the latter-named place. A stubborn and sanguinary battle followed, and victory again perched upon the banners of the Union troops. Geary was in the thickest of the fray, and while furthest in advance, driving the rebels before him, orders came for him to return, and thus this campaign, one of the most glorious and successful of the war, terminated with increased lustre to the fame of Grant and Hooker, under whose command it had been fought, and to John W. Geary and the other leaders who had battled victoriously from its inception to its close.

In the early part of the following month, General Geary issued the following general order:

"HEADQUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, TWELFTH ARMY CORPS,

*"Wauhatchie, Tenn., December 3, 1863.*

"A most important era in the present contest for national existence has just been passed; battles culminating in grandest success, fought and won, and the part taken by the troops of this Division in the engagements by which it has been marked, having reflected so much honor upon themselves as individuals, and the command to which they are attached, the General commanding cannot refrain from alluding to these services in terms which shall convey in some measure his warm appreciation of their valor, their patriotism and their noble endurance of severe hardships, while engaged in the arduous campaign.

"With heartfelt pride he refers to their prowess in the assaults which made them the heroes of Lookout Mountain on the 24th ultimo, and to their gallant conduct upon Mission Ridge on the 25th, Pea Vine Creek on the 26th, and at Ringgold upon Taylor's Ridge on the 27th. The conquest of Lookout Mountain will, associated with the emblematic 'White Star' of the conquerors, stand out as prominently in history as do the beetling cliffs of that Titanic eminence upon the horizon.

"For these services he tenders them his heartfelt thanks; for their endurance his sympathy; for their bereavement in the loss of so many gallant officers and so many brave and noble men, his condolence. In all the Division, death could not have selected braver spirits, nobler hearts, than those who have laid their lives a sacrifice upon their country's altar in the recent engagements with the rebel forces. He assures them that their gallant conduct has gained for them the high esteem and appreciation of the commanding generals.

"It behooves us to remember prayerfully that the hand of the Omnipotent Architect of the Universe is visible in our great victories, and that He who holds in His hands the destinies of nations, has in His goodness answered the humble petitions for success to crown our arms, which ascended from anxious hearts to His Heavenly throne."

### Campaign of Atlanta.

In the spring of 1864 the Army of the Southwest was reorganized, and Grant, having been invested with the rank of Lieutenant-general, and appointed Commander-in-Chief, Sherman assumed command of all the forces designed to operate in the Southwestern and Southern States. By direction of that great Captain important changes were effected in the combinations and appointments of his army. Among others the 11th Corps (Howard's) and the 12th (Slocum's) were consolidated, becoming in this form the 20th Army Corps, with "Fighting Joe Hooker" in command. Geary was continued in charge of the 2d Division, consisting of his old troops, with the addition of one brigade from the 11th Corps. The two great campaigns of this memorable year were opened on the sam-



day. On the 4th of May Grant moved from the Rapidan to encounter Lee, and Sherman from Chattanooga to encounter Johnston. Sherman's army was complete in equipment, and about ninety thousand strong. The events which followed can scarcely be named in these pages. They belong to history. The future historian will note the strength of the mountainous country that was to be traversed by the Union commander, the formidable defences which his opponent had constructed to repel his advance, the danger to which every day's march from his base exposed his communications. He will tell how Sherman and his Lieutenants designed, and how they executed—how the veterans of the subordinate commands, and of the rank and file, endured the fatigues of the march, without complaint, and confronted the perils of battle without fear—how, with hard tack and bacon in their knapsacks, and the love of country in their souls, they slept through the night on the bare ground, and fought through the day mid storms of rain from heaven, and storms of bullets and shell from the lines of the enemy—how they dragged their batteries into line—how they forded rivers—how they scaled mountains—how they stormed positions when they couldn't flank them, and flanked them when they couldn't storm them—how they forced the passes of Tunnel Hill, the gorges of the Kenesaw, and the banks of the Chattahoochee—and how a grateful and admiring country uncovered at the mention of their heroic deeds, and made the very pillars of the firmament tremble with shouts of exultation over their manifold and sublime achievements.

### Battles.

It will suffice for the special object of this narrative to say that Geary was there. At the head of that division to which he was endeared, and which was endeared to him by so long a companionship in perils, hardships and sufferings, he participated in the battles of Mill Creek and Snake Gaps, May the 8th; Resaca, May 15th; New Hope Church, commencing May 26th and continuing eight consecutive days; Pine Hill, June 15th; Muddy Creek, June 17th; Nose's Creek, June 19th; Kolb's Farm, June 22d; Kenesaw, June 27th; Marietta, July 3d; Peach Tree Creek, July 20th, and the siege of Atlanta, lasting twenty-eight days, and ending in the capture of the city on the 2d of September. To use his own language: *"The campaign, from its opening till the fall of Atlanta, was really a one hundred days' fight, and may be termed a continuous battle, crowned with constant victory."*

### Sherman's March to the Sea.

General Sherman having reached the objective point, and gained the grand end of the skillful plans he had formed at Chattanooga on the 4th of May, entered at once upon other plans and dispositions. Hood was consigned to the care of Thomas, and Sherman, with one-half of his grand army, swung round upon his pivot at Atlanta, cut loose from his communications, and started on his famous march for the Atlantic coast. *He took Geary with him.* On the 25th of July Hooker had been relieved from

command of the 20th Corps, at his own request, and Williams had succeeded him, as senior Division General. Geary still remained at the head of his old division.

It is well remembered what predictions were uttered respecting Sherman's great movement toward the sea. The rebels, and the Nassau blockade-runners, the English cotton bond-holders, and the Southern sympathizing copperheads, "each did after their kind." It was said: "*He has started somewhere, but he'll not get there, nor will he ever get back.*" One-half of the envious, cowardly, malicious prediction was fulfilled. But, alas! alas! it was not the half which these sworn enemies of republican institutions so much desired to see. It was never in his mind to turn back, but to go forward. "*He came, he saw, he conquered.*" Charleston, that had so long laughed and jeered in defiant treason, and Savannah, that had deemed herself impregnable, were uncovered, and laid low. In all the movements, the marches, and battles, that drove the Union ploughshare through these hotbeds of treason, Geary and his division played their accustomed part.

### Receives the Surrender of Savannah.

General Geary led in the advance upon Savannah, after the fall of Fort McAllister, and received the surrender of the city at the head of his division. In consideration of his distinguished services, in the siege and capture, he was appointed Military Governor of the city by General Sherman. And here, as in every other administrative position he has ever occupied, he won for himself the most flattering acknowledgments. At a meeting of the citizens of Savannah, convened by Mayor Arnold, December 28, 1864, the following, among other resolutions equally complimentary, was unanimously adopted:

"*Resolved*, That Major-General Sherman having appointed Brigadier-general Geary commander of this post, who has by his urbanity as a gentleman, and his uniform kindness to our citizens, done all in his power to protect their persons from insult, and their property from injury, it is the unanimous desire of all present, that he be allowed to remain in his present position, and that for the reasons above stated, the thanks of the citizens are hereby tendered to him and the officers of his command."

### Promoted to the Rank of Major-General.

While in command of the city, as Military Governor, he was, in grateful recognition of his services throughout the war, breveted Major-general of Volunteers. His commission was dated January 12th, 1865, and the reasons assigned for his promotion, in the document itself, are for "*fitness to command and promptness to execute.*" With this well-merited mark of his country's approbation, he declined the request of the people of Savannah, that he might be continued in command of their city, and braced anew by the sense of the honor and responsibility conferred by his promotion, took the field for the final conflict.

The following extract from Major Nichols' "Story of the Great March," will explain why the people of that city were so anxious to have



him remain in command: "General Geary, commanding a division of the Twentieth Corps, is now the Military Governor of Savannah. He is a tall, stalwart, soldierly man, with a full black beard, and an open, inviting face. He has a hearty, hospitable manner, which pleases everybody; is sensibly discreet and firm; understands precisely the nature of his duties, and executes them noiselessly but effectively. The citizens are delighted with him, and they may well be so, for no city was ever kept in better order. Clean streets, careful and well instructed guards, perfect protection of property, and a general sense of comfort and security indicate the executive capacity and the good judgment of the General."

### End of the War.

During the campaign in the Carolinas, which followed the capture of Savannah, Geary's division fought on the Apalache and Oconee rivers, at Sandsboro' and Davisboro', at Salkahatchie and North and South Edisto; at Red Bank and Congaree; at Black river and Bentonville. Here, in the vicinity of Goldsboro' and Raleigh, the gigantic struggle that saved the Republic, and gave hope to the world, was brought to a close. The "*White Star*" division, with their old commander, witnessed the surrender of Johnston, and after participating in the grand review at Washington, were disbanded and returned to their homes. Their work was done. How well they did it, poets and orators, patriots and Christians, historians and philosophers, and all people who believe in God, and aspire to be free, will continue to tell in every age and with every tongue.

### Conclusion.

A few things more strictly personal to General Geary and his command, remain to be told, and may properly conclude this brief and imperfect narrative. *This valiant and faithful soldier was present and participated in sixty battles, and was four times wounded; made the entire circuit of the rebel confederacy, and fought its authors and defenders from every State that acknowledged their usurped authority. The regiment which he recruited in the beginning (the 28th Pennsylvania) continued with him to the end of the war. The brigade he commanded was the first in the whole army to re-enlist as veterans. The division he led in so many battles was never, in a single instance, either repulsed or driven by the enemy.* Its unyielding front in the day of battle will account for its losses. During its campaigns in the Southwest and South its casualties were about twenty-nine hundred, and from the time he assumed command to the close of the war, the number was not less than *ten thousand*. It is noteworthy also that no regiment, after being transferred to his brigade or division, ever left his command till it was duly mustered out of service. This universal and uninterrupted satisfaction is a very rare thing in military commands. This unusual attachment of his troops to him is to be chiefly ascribed to the following circumstances:

*First.* Their respect for his personal bravery and fortitude as a soldier, and their confidence in his prudence and skill as a commanding officer.

*Secondly, to the unwearied, the sleepless attention he gave to the comfort of his command. The methodical character of his mind enabled him to supervise all the details of marching and encamping with great facility. While other commands were frequently allowed to straggle out of time, and were badly camped, and poorly fed and clothed, his troops were always brought up to time, kept in order, snugly quartered, and, in a word, cared for in all respects as though they had been his own children. His chief Commissary and chief Quartermaster, though diligent and faithful officers, received a few hints from the General every day respecting tents and clothing, sugar and coffee, beans and rice, hard tack and bacon.*

And as to any lack of vigilance with regard to the motions of the enemy, or in any way being taken by surprise, no one ever dreamed of such an occurrence who knew anything about the structure of his mind, or his habits in the army. Some members of his personal staff, in fact, were frequently astonished at his sleepless vigilance.

This brief sketch of the military career of General Geary cannot be better closed than with the opinion of his former commander and companion in arms. Major-general Joseph Hooker says of him: "My acquaintance with General Geary is of long standing. I knew him in California, in Mexico, and during the Rebellion. It gives me great pleasure to bear testimony to his most excellent character as a military leader, and as an honorable man. I know of no officer who has performed his whole duty with more fidelity than General Geary."

But few men have been so happily constituted, or at his time of life been blessed with an experience so long and varied in the most important public affairs. In the best sense of the term he may be said to possess a thoroughly disciplined and well stored mind. He has been a schoolmaster, a civil engineer, a lawyer, a farmer, a manufacturer, and a soldier. He has served as mayor of a city, as judge of a court, as governor of a territory, and from the humble post of a volunteer captain has risen to the exalted rank of Major-General in the United States army. Tried in almost all departments of the public service, he has proved himself equal to the exigencies of his position; and amid the most difficult and adverse circumstances, his rare ability, prudence and firmness have enabled him to achieve success and honorable distinction. California and Kansas tested his civil abilities; while upon a theatre, extending from the banks of the Potomac to the shores of the Gulf, and from the harbor of Vera Cruz to the heights of Chepultepec, he has illustrated the qualities of the patriot and soldier, and asserted the honor and vindicated the authority of the Constitution and flag of his country. *And now, without having enriched himself by his superior opportunities for personal aggrandizement, he makes his home in a modest dwelling on the banks of the Susquehanna, feeling the proud consciousness that he has lived not so much for himself as to promote the highest welfare of his fellow-men.* Such, in brief, is the candidate of the National Union party in Pennsylvania for Governor of the Commonwealth.



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